

25,
The Hidden Treasure.

BEING THE
SUBSTANCE
OF A
DISCOURSE

Delivered at

*Philbatch on the Milford-Haven in
South Wales.*

In the YEAR 1753.

By JOHN CENNICK.

*I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that
thou mayest be rich,*

Rev. iii. 18.

*Riches and Honour are with me, yea durable Riches and
Righteousness; my Fruit is better than Gold, yea than
fine Gold, and my Revenue than choice Silver,*

Prov. viii. 18, 19.

D U B L I N:

Printed by S. POWELL, for the AUTHOR.

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Delivered at

St. James's Hall, London.



By JOHN C. COCKIN.

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T H E

Hidden Treasure.

MATT. xiii. 44.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto Treasure hid in a Field, which when a Man hath found he hideth, and for Joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that Field.



H O' our Lord, in the Days of his Flesh, was pleased to speak in Parables, yet he delivers his Doctrine in such a plain Manner, uses such easy Comparisons, and with such an inimitable Simplicity, that the Peasant and Herdsman, the little Child and Servant Maid can be as capable of understanding and comprehending his Mind, as the most learned and studious Philosopher on Earth.

He did it out of his infinite Wisdom, to destroy the Wisdom of the Wise, and to set at nought, and baffle, and bring to nothing the Understanding of the Prudent.

He would not leave room for the wise Man to glory in his Wisdom before him, nor give an Occasion for the Ignorant to complain because he had

not the Gift of Knowledge, or sigh under the Disadvantages of a slender Education ; for however a solid Judgment, Letters, Study, Books, and Sciences may be valuable in respect of other Matters, they help not often in the Matter of Salvation, nor have the most understanding and witty Men been always the best, but some to their Hurt have found that true, *The World by Wisdom knew not God*. On the other Hand, many unlearned Persons, and Men in other respects weak and unknowing, have found that *Wisdom which is from above*, and been wise in the Sight of God.

If the Wise, the Thinking, and Studious would stoop to learn of *Jesus*, their Knowledge in earthly Things would not hinder them to be saved ; but if they are resolved to judge of Divine Truths by their carnal Reason, and to disbelieve and doubt of what surmounts their Comprehension, and of all that is not according to the Nature of Things, they must be no *Christians*, but are in a fair way to plunge into the Abyss of Atheism, and lose the real Enjoyment of *God their Saviour* here and hereafter. So if the poor Servant in the House, or the Shepherd upon the Mountains, is disposed for eternal Life, his Ignorance shall not prevent him to become a *Child of God*. The *Holy Spirit* and *Jesus the True Light* will teach him Wisdom secretly, and make him experience and feel in his Heart the inconceivable Happiness of the Saints and Joy unspeakable. He shall be well satisfied of his safe Condition, and be inly assured, he has a Part in the Kingdom of *God* in Worlds to come.

To the Insincere, whether wise or unwise, the Gospel is a Book closed, and when one gives it to the Unlearned and says, *read it I pray thee*, he says, *I cannot do it because I am unlearned ; and when it is given to the Learned he answers, I cannot read it for it is sealed*. Hence it is that so many look upon the

Scrip-

Scriptures as a *Book of Mysteries* which very few understand, and the way to be saved a difficult and intricate Matter, and so live *willingly ignorant* of the *Things which make for their Peace*, and neglect so great *Salvation*; but else the way to Heaven is so plainly marked out, and the Direction of the *Leader of the People* is so written that he that runs may read, and a Fool need not err in the *Higbway of Holiness*.

As I said before, all the Parables of our *Saviour* are legible, and plain, and simple, and whoever wants to understand, let him do as the Disciples, who asked their *Lord* privately, and they shall be taught of *God*, and find Rest to their Souls.

The *Kingdom of God* cannot be easily likened to Things temporal, and this made our *Saviour* seem to be at a Loss unto what to compare it; but then in many respects he has compared it to Things common, because of the Infirmary of our *Flesh*. Who can truly describe Light to one blind, or make the Deaf know what are Sounds? Or who can make a natural Man sensible of the *spiritual Life*, of the manifesting of *Christ* within the Heart, and of his *Kingdom* which is not of the World.

The Beginning of *Christianity* is trusting *Jesus*; he has continually preached of the *Kingdom*, and which he says is *within you*. His Witnesses are without Number who have entered it and possessed it in the Earth, and who have sealed it with their Blood, and confirmed it in their last Moments, that the *Kingdom of God is come*, and his *Tabernacle is with Men*.

It is one while compared to a *Marriage which a King made for his Son*; another time to *Seed sown in a Field*; at another time to a *Net cast into the Sea*, which gathered of every Kind, bad and good;

at another time to a *Man who let out his Vineyard to Husbandmen* ; at another time to a *Merchant seeking goodly Pearls* ; and in the Text to *Treasure hid in a Field*.

The whole Gospel is full of these Parables, for without a Parable *Jesus spake not to the People*. He did it, that he might fulfil the Prophets, *I have used Similitudes* ; and again, *I will open my Mouth in Parables, I will utter Things which have been kept secret from the Foundation of the World*. Thus he had done during the Dispensation of the Law, which, with all its Ordinances and Ceremonies, was dark and typical of the Kingdom which was to come. When he spake to the Fathers before his coming in the Flesh he used this way, and gave them Visions, Dreams, and Signs, by which he made known his Will. The Necessity of Blood-shedding under the Law was to signify, *that without shedding Blood there was no Remission* ; the exhibiting the Victims upon the Altars, the Lambs, and Calves, &c. were Figures of that Lamb who should be shewn upon the Cross a Spectacle to Angels and Men ; and after the same manner all the Doctrines and Rites delivered by *Moses* pointed out *Jesus* and the Redemption. *Hosea* must take to him an Adulteress, and marry her before the *Children of Israel*, as a Sign that the Lord was an Husband to an adulterous People.

Ezekiel must see a Valley full of dry Bones, where by the Lord would express the State of his Church : he must prophecy to them and they lived, to signify that by his Servant's Ministry he would raise them up to a new Life, and recover them tho' now so dead and dry.

Again he is taught by the Similitude of a new-born Infant cast out into the open Field in a deplorable and unpitied Condition, the Fall ; and by the Lord's passion

passing by and seeing it in its Blood, and saying to it, *Live*, entering into a Covenant with it, swearing to it, &c. cloathing, washing, and adorning it with fine Linen and Gold, the free Salvation is meant, and the happy and good Estate we are brought into by means of the New Testament which our *Saviour* has made with us and confirmed by an Oath.

Jeremiah, by seeing *the Potter work*, understood how all were made at first by the good Creator, and when marred or broken, he saw how he did not cast the Vessel away but made it new, a Vessel that pleased him; namely, that though the World was now like a broken and marred Vessel, it was yet in a merciful Creator's Hands, who would renew it in Righteousness and be their *Saviour*.

Daniel must see Visions of the Captivity and of the *Messiah*; and in this way generally the Lord spake to the Prophets. Nor did this way of communicating the Divine Will cease, till by the Death of the Lord the *Vail was rent in two*, and a new and living way opened into the holy Place. From which Time all the Apostles and Ministers of *Jesus Christ* have used great plainness of Speech, and not done as *Moses*. They declare openly, *Jesus is the Lord*, and that *Forgiveness of Sins, Repentance, and the Gift of the Holy Ghost* are received freely by all who believe in his Name.

In my Discourse therefore I would willingly open *this Parable of the Treasure*; and as I have just mentioned a few of the figurative Visions and Signs of the Prophets before the Incarnation of *Christ*, so it may not be amiss to do the same in respect of some of the many Parables which are in the Gospel, and even in that Chapter out of which I have taken the Text, because it may help to give a Light into others of the same Nature.

When the Kingdom is compared to *the Marriage of the King's Son*, it respects that *Marriage of the Lamb* mentioned in the *Revelations*, and in other Parts of the Scripture. The *King is the Father of our Lord Christ the King of Kings*; the *Son is the Lamb*, who will take his Bride out of the Earth, and invites all to this Wedding; the *Supper* is already prepared, the *Bride* his Elect are chosen and making herself ready, her Garments are the *Lord's Righteousness*, her Crown his Glory; the *Servants* sent out are Ministers, who first preached to the *Jews*, but they made their Excuses, and now are they sent to all *Gentiles* and to *the Ends of the Earth*, to call Good and Bad to the Wedding, or to invite every Creature to the Salvation. The *King* waits till all are in. On the last Day he will see the Guests, Woe be to such as have not on the *Wedding Garment*, for they may not sit down at his Table. These are such as ventured into Eternity without being arrayed in the *white Linen of the Righteousness of Jesus*. In that Day the Trumpet shall blow *the Marriage of the Lamb is come*, all who have Virgin Hearts and are devoted to the *Redeemer*, whose Lusts have been here washed away, and their Raiment kept white, whose Hearts like a Lamp have burned with pure Love, who have had *Jesus's Love* within like a Stock of Oil, to keep it from going out, who have left the World and gone out to meet the Bridegroom, these shall enter with him into his Chamber, and follow him whithersoever he goeth. Others who have expected his coming, and made Profession of his Name, but were foolish, slept in an insecure State without their Election insured, these are the foolish Virgins, who too late pray, *Lord! Lord open to us*, who must hear him say, *Depart from me, I never knew you*.

When

When the *Kingdom* is compared to *Seed which was sown in the Field*, which sprung up one knows not how, first the *Blade*, then the *Ear*, then the ripe *Corn*, when the *Husbandman* orders the *Servants* to put in the *Sickle* and gather it, because the *Harvest* is come, our *Saviour* would have us understand, that after the *Sowing* time is over, the *Husbandman* leaves all to the *Sun* and to the early and latter *Rain* to bring it forth, and understands not how the *Seed* is nourished and brought forth, but waits for the time to reap with *Joy*. Just so when the *Son of Man* sows the *Word of Life* in the *Heart*, he first breaks it like a *Husbandman*, he defends it from *Harm*, and keeps off the *Birds of Prey*, which are the *Devils*, till his *Seed* has taken *Root* and springs up. A *Soul* is sensible of its *Divine Life*, and of the *Work* of our *Saviour*, but cannot describe to another how his *Seed* thrives and his *Husbandry* prospers; it is so, and they are happy. They perceive, as it were, first the *Blade*, the *Dawnings of Grace*, the tender *Stirrings of the Love of God*, and are glad, and as they grow ripe, like as *Corn* the more ripe it is the more it bows down, till the *Reaper* comes and takes it into the *Barn*; so a *true Christian*, the more he knows of *Jesus*, the more he experiences of his *Grace* and *Mercy*, and ripens for *Glory*, the more he bows down, and with *Humility* and *Shame* confesses his own *Unworthiness*, and adores the free *Grace of God his Saviour*; thus it is till he is called away, and brought home to the *Store-house* above, like a *Shock of Corn* fully ripe; then all *Danger of Birds* devouring the *Seed* is over, all *Fear of a blasting Wind* is removed, and every *Care* ceases for ever.

When the *Kingdom* is likened at another time to *Seed sown in the Field*, it is after this manner, A certain

certain Man sowed good Seed, and while Men slept his Enemy came and sowed Tares, i. e. Darnel*; when the Wheat sprung up, the Tares came up also, and the Servants told their Lord, and would have rooted them up, and weeded them out directly; but lest they should weed up the tender Grain with them, he bid them let both grow together, and in the Harvest he made them gather the Wheat into his Garner, but burn the Tares in Bundles.

This in great measure our Saviour has explained; the Sower is Himself, the Field the World, the good Seed are the Children of God, the Tares the Children of Satan. Whenever he gathers him a little Flock of Children, while his Servants the Ministers forget they are Watchmen and sleep, Satan sows among them Hypocrites and wicked People, so that few, if any, Congregations have continued always free from false Brethren. Thus among the twelve was a Judas, among the Disciples afterwards a Simon Magus, and judaizing Preachers who troubled the Churches, and others who by their wicked Lives were Enemies to the Cross of Christ. The Holy Angels would willingly root such out of the World by sudden Deaths and by Judgments, as in the former Times; but lest that Severity should frighten a tender Child, a young Believer, and make him lose his Confidence in his Lord, Jesus is pleased both shall grow together. He knows it is his Enemy's Work, that from the Beginning has done so, but when the last Day comes he will take the Tares in Bundles and burn them, the Whoremongers in their Bundle, the Drunkards in a Heap together, the covetous and avaricious and in their Company, but the Wheat, his own dear Children, he will bring safe with him into Heaven.

When

* It is a Weed much like Corn, but has an insatiating, stupifying Quality, and of great Hurt to the Crop.

When the *Kingdom* is compared to a *Net* cast into the *Sea*, it is unfolded thus; the *Sea* is the *World*, the *Fishermen* the *Ministers of Christ*, the *Net* is the *Gospel*. When they preach the *Gospel* to every *Creature*, *Good* and *Bad* flock together and are taken with the good *News*; but when all is brought to *Shore*, some are found unfit for *Use*, while others are preserved in little *Companies*, as in *Vessels*, till they are brought home to *God*; some the *Fishermen* throw back into the *Sea* as too small, and these may be taken again when they are fit for *Use*. So some go back to the *World*, and perhaps are called another time, when they are thoroughly tired and sick of their *Sins* and the *Service of Satan*, and are saved; but who is cast away at the *Day of Judgment*, he perishes, tho' caught in the same *Net* with others who are found precious in the *Eyes of the Lord*. In that *Day* two may be in one *Bed*, the one shall be taken and the other left; two *Women* may be in the *Field* together, or grinding at the same *Mill*, when one is taken and the other is left.

In the *Parable of the Vineyard* which was let out to *Husbandmen*, our *Saviour* treats chiefly of the *Jewish Priests and Rulers*, to whom he had committed his *Word and Law*. The *Prophets* were the *Servants* who came to ask the *Fruit*, and to exhort them to a *Life* becoming a *Church and Family of God*, these they stoned, killed, and persecuted till *God* sent his *Son*, and then *Satan* inspired them with double *Cruelty*; they thought if he were killed they should have no *Trouble* more in *Israel*, but go on in *Peace*. *Satan*, who set them on, also thought, If I could but overcome him, whom he knew to be *Heir of All*, he should then have the whole *World* in his *Hands*. The driving out of these *Husbandmen*, and letting out the *Vineyard* to others, signified the rejecting

rejecting the *Jews*, and giving the Gospel to the *Gentiles*; but this Parable also is levelled against all persecuting Spirits and People, who, as soon as they lose the Treasure of Faith and the Presence of the *Shekinab*, and persecute the Messengers and Witnesses of the *Redeemer*, are rejected, the Ark is removed, the Candlestick brought out from among them, and given to a People who shall render the Fruit to the *Lord* in due Season.

In the *Parable of calling and hiring Servants into the Vineyard* much is included; the *Vineyard* is the Church, so *Isaiab* had preached long ago; the *Lord* the *Holy Spirit* calls Men into it; some are called in their Childhood and Youth, and some upon their Death-beds, and when their Hair is grey with Age. Very often the old Sinner is paid first, *i. e.* taken first into the Kingdom of Heaven, and such as the *penitent Thief*, snatched from the Gates of Hell, as it were, and carried joyfully to the Throne, while others that were first called continue labouring in the World, bearing the Heat of Persecution, and enduring all Hardships, and these sometimes are tempted to murmur; with these our *Saviour* expostulates, and asks, *Is thy Eye evil, because mine is good? or cannot I do what I will with my own?* As if he would say, *Cannot I take a Wretch from the Jaws of Death and save him, and might not I send the Self-righteous away empty? Grace and Heaven are my own, and I bestow them where I will out of mere Compassion and Pity, and not because any have deserved it from me.* This Parable is to set forth the *Sovereignty of our God*, and to justify his saving *Publicans and Harlots*, and calling into his Fold the *chief of Sinners*, as well as such who have been early serious and religious, and called in the first Hours of the Day. It was designed to suppress the *Jewish* Ri-
sings

sings and Murmurings, as if *the Ways of the Lord were not equal*, and to silence self-righteous Reasoners.

There is yet another *Parable of a Merchant's seeking costly Pearls*, who having found *one of great Value*, went and sold all he had to purchase it. The *Merchant* is a *Soul* a-thirst for Salvation, and who is like a Merchant traversing Sea and Land to find it, who having found *Jesus*, the most *costly Pearl*, parts with all he has, and counts all Dross and Dung that he may inherit *this Pearl*. What he before esteemed precious, or served him instead of Holiness, he undervalues; and whatever before he counted Riches, Wisdom, good Deeds, Gifts, Graces, and Qualities, esteems nothing now but *this Jewel, this elect precious Stone*, and is richer in the possessing him than if he had all Heaven and Earth without him.

But the *Parable* of which I shall treat chiefly is of *Treasure hid in a Field*. Should a Person pass through your Country, and pointing to a *Field* assure the Inhabitants and Neighbours that there was much Money buried there; as many as were incredulous would smile at the Report, and mock those who would credit and go about to dig for it; they themselves would not search for it, because they could not believe it was there, nor could they help despising such as did for the same Reason: But if some believed the News, they would go and dig and search for the Treasure till they had found it, and having secured it, would naturally part with all they had to buy that Field.

Thus it is when the *Kingdom of God* is preached in a Land; Salvation and the Love of our *Saviour*, Pardon of Sins, and our *Lord's* Presence is declared to be found in this Life and in our mortal State; *Jesus* is himself manifested and known, he comes and brings with him *his Father*, and dwells with us; *his Reward*
also

also is with him, his Righteousness and Merits, his Redemption and Kingdom are revealed at his appearing.

This is a *Treasure indeed!* and this is *that Treasure* spoken of in the Parable which is more precious than *the Gold of Ophir*, but it is *hid*; it is in the World, but yet invisible, as all the great Things of our Saviour are: *His Kingdom is not of the World*, yet it is there, and, as himself expresses it, *it is within you, it is not far from hence*. His Wisdom is understood secretly; the *Manna* that he promises is *Hidden Manna*; his *Leaven* is *hid in the Meal*. It is therefore well called *the Secret of the Lord, bidden Wisdom, Peace which the World cannot give, Joy which a Stranger intermeddleth not with, Happiness which no Eye has seen, no Ear heard, nor has it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive rightly of it*, till inspired from the *Lamb*, or till it is revealed by the *Spirit*.

Our Saviour's Kingdom is come and many press into it, but some when they hear of *this Treasure* despise it; they believe no such is found in this World; they think no such Happiness is attainable in this Life, and therefore they neither seek it or ask it, but are like People who hear of *Treasure hid in a Field*, but esteem it a Dream, or Fancy, or Cheat, and so never seek for it; so all who do not believe the Kingdom attainable now, cannot possibly enter it, *because of Unbelief*. They cannot seek it, because they don't believe it is to be found; they can't ask for the *Knowledge of Salvation by the Forgiveness of Sins*, because they think it is not got till we die; they don't seek the *Lord*, for they believe to expect *to receive the Holy Ghost and know our Saviour* is Presumption. Thus pure *Unbelief* hinders them to enter the *Rest* remaining for the People of God, But why don't they believe? Is it because the *Lord* has promised no such Blessing? No, he has promised it. All the Scriptures are filled with Promises of this Kind.

Kind. *All was written that we might believe in Jesus and have eternal Life through his Name.*

Is it then because none have found *this Treasure*? By no means! for in all Places there are Witnesses of it, among all sorts of People there are Men who have found *the Beloved*, who know *their Redeemer lives*, and who have got Salvation in his Blood even *Remission of their Sins*. But the Truth is, they neither believe Jesus nor his Disciples, they put it off and say, *What is in the Scripture concerned the Apostles and first Ages of the Church*, and as violently oppose the Continuation of those Blessings as if no Bible was in the World. Let such take care lest that happen to them which is written in the Prophets, *Behold I work a Work in your Days which ye will not believe tho' a Man declare it unto you.*

It is otherwise with some, for they hear of *this hidden Treasure*, and they seek it till they have found it. If any should look for other Treasure, a great Part of them might look in vain, and perhaps after many Days and Weeks Labour another may find it, and all their Toil be fruitless and lost; but it is so ordered by Him who has *bid this Treasure*, that *all who seek shall find, all that ask shall have, and all who run in this Race shall win the Prize.*

This Treasure is found in Jesus, in him are bid all the Treasures of God. Whoever wants to be rich in Eternity must have him. He is *the costly Pearl, the Pearl of great Price.* He is that *true Treasure which no Moth or Rust can corrupt, and which no Thief can break thro' and steal.* Ye dear Souls who are minded to find *this true and real Treasure*, this solid and lasting Riches, come to Jesus and you shall find it there.

Be not faithless, but believe Jesus Christ's Kingdom is yet to be found, his Salvation is yet to be experienced, his Love is yet to be felt in the Heart. Up and seek it, be in earnest about it, remember the Kingdom
of

of God suffers Violence, and the Violent take it by Force. Whoſo ſeeks with all his Heart ſhall find it, and then he will readily part with all he has to purchaſe that Field; he will count all other Things, all Gain, Company, Pleaſures, Honours, Beauty, Friends, and whatever elſe he valued before, ſpiritual or temporal, as *Loſs that he may get and win Jeſus*; nor need he be afraid of others getting his Riches and ſo muſt hide it, there is enough for all; and therefore when a Soul has found *Chriſt* he is like the Woman of *Samaria*, *Philip*, and others, he would call and invite every Man to come and ſee *Jeſus* too: He is happy, he is in the Kingdom, and wants all even his Enemies to come in to the ſame.

My Brethren, be thus minded; let all your Buſineſs, your Religion, your Endeavours, and Aim be to know and have *Jeſus Chriſt*. Let this be the *Mark of the Prize of your High Calling*. Value nothing beſide, love nothing, count nothing Riches or Treafure, deſire nothing, aſk nothing but to have him and his Merits, and then you will be rich, *the Kingdom of Heaven ſhall be yours, the Life that now is, and that which is to come*, all ſhall be yours for ever and ever.

While others deſpiſe ſo ineſtimable a Benefit, diſbelieve and ſcorn it, and mock and deride *the ſincere Few*, who are digging after *this Treafure*, and in ſearch after this Riches and Kingdom, continue ye in Faith. Let our *Saviour's* Promiſe be ſteadily believ'd, and think not well of yourſelves till ye have entered the Poſſeſſion of this Grace, ſo ſhall ye be happy here and hereafter. Here ye ſhall be Kings over *Satan* and the World, and foretaſte and anticipate your Heaven, and no Man ſhall be able to rob you of your Crown; you ſhall have your Portion ſafe when the Heavens vaniſh away, and when the Earth is burnt up; you ſhall then be in *a continuing City, in a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken*, World without End. Amen.

F I N I S.

